

**CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION MEETING**  
**APPROVED Meeting Minutes**  
**February 2, 2005**  
**Boise, ID**

A regular meeting of the Idaho Charter School Commission was held on February 2, 2005 in the Lookout Room at Boise State University in Boise, Idaho. Chairman Hammond presided. The following members were present:

Marianne Donnelly  
Bill Goesling  
Paul Powell

Jim Hammond  
Kirk Miller

Ann Souza  
Esther Van Wart

The open meeting convened at 8 a.m.

**1. COMMISSION WORK**

a) Agenda Approval

**M/S (Powell/Miller): To approve Agenda as suggested.** *The motion carried unanimously.*

b) Rolling Calendar

**M/S (/Ann): To approve the next meeting date as Thursday, March 3, 2005 at Boise State University.** *The motion carried unanimously.*

**2. Liberty Public Charter School**

Students from Liberty Charter School made a presentation on behalf of Liberty Charter School. The presentation addressed the teaching philosophy of Liberty Charter School, community involvement and service of the students at Liberty, and student apprenticeships.

Sandy Colbert, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher at Liberty Charter School, Sheila Bryant, member of the governing Board, and Rebecca Stallcop, administrator at Liberty Charter School addressed the Commission, opening with an introduction detailing the history and present condition of Liberty Charter School. Chairman Hammond then opened the floor for questions.

The Commission asked the presenters from Liberty for more information regarding the business side of the operation; issues of bill still owed to the Nampa School District, and other business related issues.

Ms. Stallcop stated that the Nampa School District is amending the bill submitted to Liberty. She also said that when the amended bill is submitted, it will be paid.

Commissioners asked Commission staff if they had any additional information regarding the outstanding bill from the Nampa School District. Commission staff cited a letter from Liberty to the Nampa School District that indicated they would pay the reimbursement when the School District identified the formula used for dual enrollment. Commissioners asked the Liberty representatives when they feel this situation will reach a conclusion. Ms. Bryant stated that as soon as the amended bill is received the situation should be resolved.

Commissioner Donnelly asked for clarification regarding what options Liberty Charter School would have if the Commission did not take over the charter. Commission Legal Counsel answered that if the Commission denied the charter, Liberty could appeal to the State Board of Education.

Commissioners then asked Liberty about the Special Education student population and why it decreases throughout the year. Ms. Stallcop answered that their method of instruction helps special education students flourish and they end up being taken off their IEPs. They noted that the decline of numbers doesn't indicate a loss of the special education students.

The Commission questioned Liberty regarding their school safety policy. Ms. Stallcop noted that at their next Board meeting, they are looking at a new and clarified policy. Commissioner Van Wart asked for clarification regarding the safety policy and if it had a zero tolerance clause. Liberty representatives answered that they follow Idaho code and that they do have zero tolerance policies.

Commissioner Van Wart also asked about the status of Liberty's bill with the Nampa church. Ms. Stallcop answered that the situation with the church in Nampa has entered into mediation. Chairman Hammond clarified that the issue was still unresolved.

Commissioners asked staff if Liberty had satisfied the concerns expressed by the State Department of Education in the legal sufficiency review. Commission staff stated that it would be beneficial to have more detail – but all of the items have been addressed. One exception is the discipline policy.

Commissioners asked Liberty representatives for clarification regarding their admission policies, lottery procedures, school attendance zone, and financial situations.

Chairman Hammond then opened the floor for public testimony. Cindy Schiller and Laurie Boeckel, Nampa residents, presented public testimony. Public

testimony consisted of concerns with the lottery, accountability, and ethical activity.

**M/S (Powell/Miller): Move that the Commission accept responsibility for the charter of Liberty Charter School, as amended. *Vote held for discussion.***

Chairman Hammond asked if there would be consideration to add to the motion “subject to resolution of outstanding issues”

Commission and staff discussed the appropriate intent and wording of the motion to convey that the issues are resolved before the Commission approves oversight of Liberty’s charter. Commissioners clarified the three “outstanding” issues: 1) safety of students and discipline policy 2) final resolution on money owed to the district and 3) successful mediation of the billing from the church to Liberty Charter School.

Commission staff asked the Commission for clarification regarding the motion, and what process would take place regarding immediate acceptance of charter or if acceptance would take place after resolution of earlier mentioned issues.

Chairman Hammond clarified that the Commission would assume oversight once Liberty has provided evidence to staff that issues have been resolved. Liberty would continue to operate under their current authorizer up until that point. The determination of resolution of the issues would be up to Commission staff.

**M/S (Powell/Miller): Move that the Commission accept responsibility for the Liberty Charter School, as amended under three conditions to be satisfied within thirty days: the issue of safety of students policy, the issue of resolution of financial situation with the school district and the resolution of the financial situation with the church. *A roll call vote was taken; motion passed 4-3, with Commissioners Van Wart, Souza, and Donnelly voting “nay”.***

Further discussion on the motion was held and Commissioner Goesling suggested that a timeline would be appropriate for the student safety policy, but the resolution of the financial situations with the church will be determined by the legal entities involved. Commissioner Goesling suggested that Commission staff would determine if the petitioners had reached resolution.

### **3. Taylor’s Crossing Public Charter School**

Paul Wallace, Linda Holt, Erica Radford, Kami Risch, Susan Olsen and Rebecca Bohman addressed the Commission on behalf of Taylor’s Crossing Charter School. Following a brief introduction from Taylor’s Crossing representatives, Chairman Hammond opened the floor for questions.

Commissioner Powell asked the representatives if there was anything identified in the staff memo with which the petitioners disagreed.

Taylor's Crossing petitioners responded by saying that the only action taken after reading the staff memo was to further comply or further clarify issues that were presented in the staff memo.

Chairman Hammond then opened the floor for public testimony. Gary Jones, Director of Assessment and Special Projects for District #93, addressed the Commission. Mr. Jones stated that the Bonneville School District thinks that the process needs to go forward more incrementally. It is a longer process that takes time. The district would prefer that the Commission refer Taylor's Crossing Public Charter School back to the district to go through the process. The district would prefer district oversight of the Charter school.

Commissioners asked for further clarification regarding the timeline/history of Taylor's Crossing's interactions with the district.

Commissioner Miller asked Mr. Jones if the Board of Trustees voted to deny the petition. Mr. Jones stated that no, at the public hearing held on January 5, at the conclusion of the public hearing, the Chairman asked the Taylor's Crossing petitioners to either work with them or with the Commission.

Commissioner Hammond then recalled the petitioners from Taylor's Crossing back to the table to answer Commissioners' questions.

The Commissioners noted a few observations; Taylor's Crossing and the district need to have more face-to-face meetings and fewer letters and petitioners need to realize this is a long-term commitment – not just one year.

Commissioner Powell stated that the Commission would like to see petitioners work this out with the district in the most expedient way.

**M/S (Goesling/Donnelly): A motion to deny the charter for Taylor's Crossing Public Charter School based on item #28 of the staff memo.**  
*Motion later amended.*

Commissioner Goesling clarified that the Commission would hope by denying the petition that the District and the petitioners could work it out on the local level.

Chairman Hammond commented that the Commission would hope that if the petition was denied, the district is truly sincere to sit down with the petitioners to work out the issues.

Legal Counsel noted that in order for the Commission to deny the charter, they must list reasons for denial.

Commissioner Powell asked if there would be some way for both the petitioners and the district to go back to the table; and if it would be appropriate to table the petition. Commissioner Powell noted there should be flexibility with both parties if they work this out on the local level.

Commissioner Goesling said he would be willing to withdraw the motion if both parties would agree to work a compromise.

**M/S (Miller/Van Wart): A motion to deny Taylor's Crossing based on all deficiencies identified by State Department of Education's sufficiency review and Commission Staff memo. *Motion withdrawn.***

Commissioner Powell noted that he wasn't sure the denial of the petition would send the message the Commission wanted to communicate.

**M/S (Goesling/Souza): A motion to hold the decision on Taylor's Crossing Public Charter School for 60 days. *Motion passed unanimously.***

#### **4. Renaissance School of the Arts**

Commissioner Donnelly asked to be recused from this issue because of personal involvement with the petition. Chairman Hammond noted that Commissioner Donnelly can be involved with the discussion and then if she wished to recuse herself from voting, she could abstain at the point.

Betty Jo Willey, the chair of the board of the Pocatello Renaissance School of the Arts, addressed the Commission. Kathy Rankin, a member of the board of the Pocatello Renaissance School of the Arts, also addressed the Commission regarding the petition's inception, curriculum, and concept-based methodology.

Commissioner Powell noted that based on Commission staff review and Department of Education review, there are a number of deficiencies that have not been addressed.

Commission staff noted that they did receive supplemental materials and a revised petition from the petitioners but that staff had not had time to review.

The Commission stated that staff needed time to review corrections to the petition and that the Commission could consider this motion at a later date.

Chairman Hammond then opened the floor for public testimony. Mr. Chuck Wegner, Director of Curriculum for District #25, addressed the Commission

regarding the detrimental impact the petition would have on their school district. Mr. Wegner also spoke about deficiencies that the District found in the petition.

**M/S (Powell/Goesling): A motion to hold the decision on Renaissance Public Charter School until the next meeting of the Commission and to direct Commission staff to work with the petitioners to address concerns.**  
*Motion amended.*

The Commission noted that if the time frame did not grant the petitioners enough time to work with staff to address their deficiencies, the time line could be extended by mutual agreement between staff and the petitioners.

**M/S (Powell/Goesling): A motion to hold the decision on Renaissance Public Charter School until such time as that petitioners and staff have worked through deficiencies and have materials ready to be brought back to the Commission.** *Motion passed unanimously.*

**Chairman Hammond adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.**